

CECV NEWSLETTER

Smarter Schools National Partnerships Activities in the Victorian Catholic Sector

Welcome to the first edition of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) Smarter Schools National Partnerships Newsletter

The aim of this newsletter is to provide

- an overview of the Commonwealth-State *Smarter Schools* National Partnerships (SSNP) reform
- a snapshot of the wide range of innovative SSNP projects and activities currently occurring across the Victorian Dioceses in response to this reform agenda and,
- Sources of SSNP information.

We hope that this newsletter is of support to principals and staff involved in the *Smarter Schools* National Partnerships in the three key reform areas of Literacy and Numeracy, Low Social Economic Status (SES) School Communities and Teacher Quality.

Smarter Schools National Partnerships – an Overview of the Reform Agenda

All three Victorian school sectors have been active participants in the development of the Bilateral Agreement and the Victorian Implementation Plan (VIP) for the *Smarter Schools* National Partnerships (SSNPs). The VIP involves the integration of Commonwealth and State funding to construct a State-wide Improvement Strategy.

The Catholic sector has agreed to work collaboratively on agreed projects through the life of the SSNPs.

Victoria has sought to integrate initiatives across the SSNPs to ensure a comprehensive approach to school improvement. To achieve this Victoria has focussed on three key priorities with a range of initiatives in each:

- Leadership and teacher capacity
- Recognition and response to individual learning needs
- School and community engagement.

The CECV *Catholic Implementation Plan* (CIP) was developed as the Victorian Catholic sector's response to the VIP. The CIP is available on the CECV website: <<http://www.cecvcatholic.edu.au>> under *Projects* and *Smarter Schools National Partnerships*.



***Working together to improve
outcomes for Catholic students***

Victorian Catholic Sector Collaboration

The CIP reflects the commitment CECV has to an inter-diocesan approach to planning, implementing and evaluating the initiatives undertaken by the Catholic sector in the SSNPs. This commitment to collaboration across dioceses and sectors builds on an existing culture of collaborative practice, strengthened by the unique opportunity that the SSNPs present in each reform area:

- The Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership, which runs over four years, from 2008-2009 through to 2011-2012
- The Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership, which runs over seven years, from 2008-09 to 2014-15
- The Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership, which runs over five years, from 2008-2009 through to 2012-2013.

The ambitious reform areas identified in the *Smarter Schools* NPs challenge all involved to take an outward-looking approach and to seek opportunities to work on initiatives that benefit all students.

CECV is committed to research and evaluation of these reforms to ensure that ongoing investment is underpinned by a strong evidence base around sustained improved practice in schools and outcomes for students.



Australian Government



CECV Governance Structure

The CECV has established an effective governance structure to support the implementation of the Catholic Implementation Plan. The National Partnership Committee (NPC) is an *ad hoc* Committee of the CECV in which a nominee from each Diocese was appointed by the Diocesan Director to the NPC as a member of the committee. The NPC plays a key role in assisting the CECV Board to fulfil its corporate governance and oversees responsibilities in areas such as financial reporting, government accountability and compliance responsibilities related to the *Smarter Schools* National Partnership Programs.

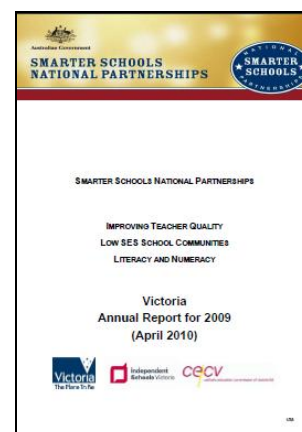
This structure enables a holistic and integrated approach to the *Smarter Schools* National Partnerships reforms in the Catholic school sector. It provides the means to address the priorities and principles identified by the CECV through a balance of both expert and diocesan representation to optimise the potential for innovative reform at the systemic level.

Victoria's Accountability Requirements to DEEWR

Under the Bilateral Agreement, Victoria is to provide an Annual Report and Annual Progress Report throughout the life of the VIP.

Information provided by the Catholic, Government and Independent sectors is collated for reporting to the Australian Government. The first Victorian Annual Report for 2009 (due April 2010) was published by DEEWR in June 2010.

View the **Victoria Annual Report for 2009 (April 2010)** on the DEEWR website: <<http://www.deewr.gov.au>> under *Schooling/Programs/Smarter Schools*.



Supporting Smarter Schools National Partnerships in Catholic Schools

The diocesan structure of the Catholic sector in Victoria enables collaborative relationships with and the provision of direct support to schools. The 121 Catholic schools participating in the *Smarter Schools* National Partnership (SSNPs) are engaged through consultation with their local diocesan/regional office.

The role of each diocesan office is to provide targeted strategic support to schools in response to school goals articulated through school improvement plans and annual action plans. Schools have been able to include the improvement strategies which align with their relevant SSNPs within their annual action plans, reflecting alignment with the school's broader goals.

Each Catholic Education Office will additionally support the monitoring and reporting process both at the school and diocesan level.

Annual Reporting and Accountability Requirements for Schools Involved in Smarter Schools National Partnerships

Effective from 2009, all State and Territory schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy and Low SES School Communities Smarter Schools National Partnerships (SSNPs) were required to document SSNP initiatives in their School Improvement and Annual Action Plans. Additionally, schools were required to report on their SSNP progress in their 2009 Annual Report to the school community.

In the Catholic sector in Victoria, schools met this requirement by completing and including an Annual Activity and Accountability Statement 2009 in their school's Annual Report 2009.

The Diocesan Catholic Education Offices are committed to providing ongoing support to schools participating in the *Smarter Schools* National Partnerships.

The School Annual Reports 2009 are now available on the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) State Register



CECV SMARTER SCHOOLS NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS (SSNP) PROJECTS

The Victorian Catholic Dioceses have implemented a wide range of tailored strategies, including pilot programs, evaluation and research, across the three *Smarter Schools* National Partnerships (SSNPs). Additionally, a range of CECV Victorian wide projects have been implemented through the collaborative Inter-diocesan Expert Working Groups.

Some samples of Catholic sector and diocesan projects are summarised below:

Principal and Leadership Coaching / Professional Learning Opportunities

DIOCESAN STRATEGIES

The focus of this Teacher Quality SSNP is on building leadership capacity through coaching and professional learning opportunities.

The four dioceses have implemented diocesan specific strategies, tailored to support school principals and leadership teams in leading school improvement.

Strategies include, for example, a CEOM Aspiring Principals program open to participants from all dioceses.

For details of professional learning opportunities, please contact your Catholic Education Office

Bachelor of Education Primary Course (Multimodal)

CEOM MELBOURNE STRATEGY

The focus of this Teacher Quality SSNP four-year pilot program is on pre-service teacher education. This is a CEOM-Australian Catholic University (ACU) partnership which involves school team leaders and established teachers in selected Victorian schools working with an ACU project manager.

16 pre-service teachers in their final year of the degree course have been placed in 7 partner schools for two days a week and school teams of 4 experienced teachers have been established at each site.

Schools interested in being involved for 2011 should contact Dr Mary Oski, Tel: 9267 0228

Family School Partnerships: A System Wide Initiative in the Implementation of Reform

CECV VICTORIA WIDE PROJECT

This SSNP project is a significant three year initiative for all identified schools participating in the Low SES School Communities SSNPs to implement a strategic approach to family school partnerships to maximise student learning outcomes.

Literacy and Numeracy Best Practice Evaluation

CECV VICTORIA WIDE PROJECT

This CECV evaluation project aims to identify the VIP initiatives that have significant impact on driving improvement in Literacy and Numeracy outcomes in Catholic schools in Victoria. CECV will seek to identify successful approaches to Literacy and Numeracy improvement that can be consistently implemented across each diocese in Victoria.

Career Enhancement Pathways for Indigenous Education Workers and Teaching Sponsorships for Indigenous Students

CECV VICTORIA WIDE PROJECT

This CECV Teacher Quality SSNP initiative has provided three of six Victoria-wide sponsored positions to current Koorie Education Workers to complete an Associate Diploma in Indigenous Education. Additionally, four bursaries have been awarded to support Indigenous students commencing various studies leading towards a Bachelor of Education.

Schools interested in more information should contact Dr Mary Oski, Tel: 9267 0228

English and a Second Language (ESL) Proficiency Assessment Tool

VICTORIAN CROSS-SECTORAL PROJECT

This project is a collaborative project across all three school sectors, which aims to develop a set of English as a Second Language (ESL) assessment tools and advice to contribute to the effective assessment of student progress and provide robust data to inform teaching and learning for ESL students Prep – Year 12. Phase 1 of the four-phase project is in progress.

Further Information on Smarter Schools National Partnerships Initiatives



For further information on the Smarter Schools National Partnerships, contact your Catholic Education Office

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The Catholic Implementation Plan (CIP)

View the Catholic Implementation Plan on the CECV website: <http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au> by selecting *Projects* and *Smarter Schools National Partnerships*.

Family School Partnerships (FSP) e-newsletter

The Catholic Education Office Melbourne (CEOM) published its first edition of the CEOM Family School Partnerships e-newsletter in June (Issue 1, Term 2, 2010). This e-newsletter aims to support the Melbourne schools participating in the Low SES School Communities Smarter Schools National Partnerships.

Diocese of Sale – Smarter Schools National Partnerships School Update Newsletter

The Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Sale publishes monthly updates (effective February 2010) for Sale schools participating in the Smarter Schools National Partnerships. View the newsletter updates on the Catholic Education Office Sale website: <http://www2.ceosale.catholic.edu.au> under *Services to Schools/ Curriculum and Innovation/National Partnerships/National Partnerships Schools Updates*.

Catholic Education Victoria Network (CEVN)

The Catholic Education Offices will continue to contact participating school principals in relation to Smarter School National Partnership strategies (e.g. professional learning opportunities), forums and requirements such as Annual Reporting. Where appropriate, principals and relevant staff may be directed to the Catholic Education Victoria Network (CEVN) for further information.

Useful Websites for further Smarter Schools National Partnerships information

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)

<http://www.deewr.gov.au> Under: *Schooling/Programs/Smarter Schools*

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au> Under: *Department Priorities/National Partnerships/Smarter Schools*

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)

<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au> Under: *State Register* to view 2009 Annual Reports to the School Community